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MIGRATION--ITS IMPLICATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN A RURAL AREA.

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MIGRATION IS DEFINED AS THE MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE FROM ONE LOCALITY TO ANOTHER. IT WAS A BASIC FACTOR IN NORTH DAKOTA'S POPULATION CHANGE BETWEEN 1950 AND 1960. ALTHOUGH THE STATE EXPERIENCED 117,600 MORE BIRTHS THAN DEATHS, THE INCREASE IN POPULATION AMOUNTED TO ONLY 12,600 DUE TO AN OUT OF STATE MIGRATION OF 105,000 PERSONS. THE GREATEST POPULATION LOSS RESULTED IN THE RURAL AREAS. SINCE RURAL MIGRANTS TEND TO HAVE LESS SUCCESSFUL OCCUPATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT THAN THEIR URBAN COUNTERPARTS, THE NECESSITY OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING IS SUGGESTED FOR COPING WITH THE PROBLEM. COMPLETE MIGRATION DATA ARE NECESSARY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A VOCATIONAL CURRICULUM IN NORTH DAKOTA. THIS ARTICLE APPEARED IN THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION RECORD, VOL. 51 NO. 9, JUNE, 1966. (ES)

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Migration: Its Implication for the Development of Vocational Education in a Rural Area

James J. Kiefert and Ronald L. Johnson

Under conditions in which freedom of choice may be exercised, migration, which is the movement of people from one locality to another, can be viewed as an on-going decision-making process. In this process the individual weighs the satisfactions with life in the community against the perceived cost of migrating to another area. This evaluation process takes place in relation to the level of aspirations derived from the value orientation, range of knowledge and experiences of groups and individuals. Perceptions of discomfort due to leaving friends and familiar groups and of discomforts at the area of destination are considered as inhibiting decisions to move and will hereafter be referred to as "social cost."[1]

Migration is one of three basic factors in population change; the other two are births and deaths. The natural increase of population represents the difference between the births and deaths. The net migration represents the difference between the actual population and population at some previous year, such as a census year, plus its natural increase.

Between 1950 and 1960 there were approximately 117,600 more births than deaths in North Dakota. This addition of members through natural growth produced a potential 1960 population of

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1. Allen J. Beegle, "Sociological Aspects of Changes in Farm Labor Force," *Labor Mobility and Population in Agriculture*, ed. Earl O. Heady (Ames, Iowa State University Press, 1961), pp. 73-82.

about 737,000 persons for the state. This would have been a 19 per cent increase over the 1950 population. The fact that North Dakota's population increased only 2.1 per cent in the ten-year period means that the state's natural growth was offset in large part by migration of some 105,000 people from the state.

Migration has long been a social response to change—both to changing capacities in the agricultural system and to socio-cultural attraction and opportunities in the urban areas. Some of the surplus agricultural population have moved to cities and suburbs where opportunities appear to be greater. The result is a "selective dismembering" of many communities and an inordinate growth of others. Census data indicate that the higher the percentage of people in an area who lived in towns and cities, the larger the growth of that area tended to be (or the smaller the decline). Thus, the areas which are predominantly rural have the greatest population loss.

As population change continues, and as associations and institutions are weakened by population loss, the indirect and obvious effect of population movement is reflected in economic activity, educational systems, government efforts and in the very values and purposes of social existence that motivate human behavior. The weakening of these associations and institutions brings to bear upon the community a need to re-evaluate its responsibility to the individuals who are receiving their social, moral, vocational and academic education in the community and to determine how well the community is functioning to meet these needs. Most of the individuals who migrate will do so between the ages of 16 and 29. This means that the home community has the responsibility to furnish the skills necessary to cope with the adjustment problems involved in migration.

When rural migrants move to the city they are faced with a complete change in environment and have greater handicaps to overcome. Studies have pointed out the fact that rural male migrants have less successful occupational achievement than urban male migrants. For example, male off-farm migrants tend to concentrate in three occupations: craftsmen and foremen, operatives, and laborers. Further they avoid, both relatively and absolutely, the professions, managerial, clerical and sales occupations.[4] This being the case, those people who migrate should be provided with the vocational training necessary to cope with the vocational adjustment problems involved in migration.

Parents with rural backgrounds were the least well educated among migrants and even after age and education controls were applied, men with rural backgrounds were still over-represented in

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[2]Roy W. Cook, "Population Changes in North Dakota Counties: 1950-1960," *North Dakota Farm Research*, 21 (1961), 13-17.

[3]Larry A. Sjaastad, *Migration and Population Growth in the Upper Midwest, 1930-1960*. Study Paper No. 4 (Minneapolis: Upper Midwest Economic Study), 1962.

[4]————, "Occupational Structure and Migration Patterns," *Labor Mobility and Population in Agriculture*, ed. Earl O. Heady (Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1961), pp. 8-28.

low-status occupations.[3] These and many other factors contributed to the difficult problem of adjusting to a new community. The rural to urban migrants enter the labor force as manual workers and often reside in poorer housing areas. This situation tends to persist and may prolong the adjustment to the new community at least five years. It would thus appear that the rural migrant has a great number of obstacles to overcome in relation to adjustment.

Data on migration are important in an area development of vocational education in the State of North Dakota. Development of curriculum and course content depend not only on the occupational structure of our local area but also on the occupations being filled by migrants to other areas within the state as well as in other states. Knowledge of the complete pattern of migration, including occupational mobility of out-migrants, should be used by local school systems to develop their own programs or facilities in vocational education. Knowledge of adjustment problems experienced by migrants will enable the local school to better prepare students for migration.

[3] Lee G. Burchinal and Perry E. Jacobson, "Migration and Adjustment of Farm and Urban Families and Adolescents in Cedar Rapids, Iowa," *Rural Sociology*, 28 (1963) 364-378.

[4] Beegle, *op. cit.*

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